

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 7-9 are independent and hereby amended. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification.

No new matter has been introduced. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112 AND §103(a)

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,640,301 to Ng (hereinafter, merely “Ng”), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,656 to Zabetian (hereinafter, merely “Zabetian”), in further view of Applicant’s Admitted Prior Art, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,693 to Borwankar et al. (hereinafter, merely “Borwankar”).

III. RESPONSE TO REJECTIONS

A. Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112,

Claim 9 is amended, thereby obviating the rejections.

B. Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 1, recites *inter alia*:

“A communication contents certification system:

... wherein the electronic mail is transmitted from a party communication terminal or an attorney terminal is routed to the communication contents certification apparatus that stores the contents of the electronic mail and authenticates the electronic mail based on the identification and the password of the party sending the electronic mail,

wherein a confirmation message sent from a party terminal receiving the electronic mail is routed through the communication contents certification apparatus that authenticates the confirmation message and stores the confirmation message,

wherein a reply message in response to a received electronic mail transmission is prepared with reference to a comment provided from one of said two or more attorney communication terminals and routed to the communication contents certification apparatus that authenticates and stores the reply message,

wherein the communication contents certification apparatus is owned by another party independent from the two or more parties,

wherein the charging means perform charge processing to charge at least one of the parties for at least one of authenticating and certifying the contents of the electronic mail depending on the storage organization of the communication history, storage method, frequency of backup, and data storage size for storing the communication contents,

wherein the communication contents storage means stores the communication history of the electronic mail, the confirmation message, and the reply message, and

wherein a contract is formed between the first party and the second party for using the communication contents certification system." (emphasis added)

In general, claim 1 is directed to a certification system for certifying communications such as electronic mails among parties and attorneys. Applicant respectfully submits that Ng, Zabetian, and Bonwankar, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach or disclose the above-identified features of claim 1.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable.

Independent claims 7 and 9 are patentable for similar reasons.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 7 and 9 are patentable.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

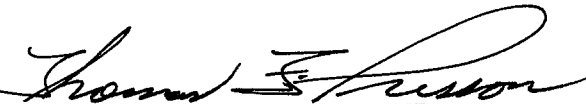
In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosures in the cited references it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicant respectfully requests early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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